



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service
Weather Forecast Office Burlington, VT
1200 Airport Dr
South Burlington, VT 05403
www.weather.gov/btv

May 10, 2018

TO: Local Emergency Managers, Public Safety Officials and Public Event Organizers

FROM: National Weather Service Burlington, VT

SUBJECT: Weather Safety During Outdoor Public Events – ***“Hope is NOT a Plan”***

During the spring, summer and fall months, there are hundreds of outdoor venues (Fairs, Festivals, Holiday Celebrations, Graduations, etc) in Vermont and New York that cater to thousands and are potentially vulnerable to hazardous weather (heat, wind, thunderstorms and floods).

A goal of the National Weather Service (NWS) is to work closely with emergency managers and public safety officials, to provide critical weather information when hazardous weather approaches an event, for overall public safety.

In 2011 at the Indiana State Fair, approaching thunderstorms and strong winds caused the collapse of the grandstand stage roof and resulted in 7 fatalities and nearly 5 dozen injuries. In 2015, thunderstorm winds caused the collapse of a tent in Lancaster, NH that resulted in 15 injuries and the tragic fatality of a father and daughter from Concord, VT.

Hoping that the weather is nice or storms miss your location **is Not A Plan**. As venue organizers and/or emergency managers for communities hosting these events, it is recommended to work together and establish an Emergency Action Plan prior to the event. During the event, closely monitor and ACT when an impending weather hazard threatens your event.

In the North Country, the NWS has established several partnerships to increase public safety during various venues; the Franklin County Fair and Franklin County Emergency Management, the Champlain Valley Exposition and Essex Junction Emergency Services and numerous venues along Burlington’s waterfront working with Burlington Emergency Services.

The main weather hazard that will likely impact an outdoor venue with very little advance notice (minutes) would be thunderstorms and lightning. Other potential weather hazards include strong winds, potential flooding and extreme heat.

NOAA Weather ALL Hazard Radio is a direct link to NWS offices by broadcasting life-saving weather warnings within seconds. Therefore, I strongly encourage venue organizers and especially local first responders and/or emergency management directors to purchase, test and utilize these radios during events to be informed and take necessary ACTION to steer people out of harm’s way.

Another reliable source for planning and monitoring is our website - www.weather.gov/burlington

We welcome all opportunities to assist local emergency managers and first responders in their decision making. The NWS Burlington office can be reached at 1-800-863-4279.

To help you prepare and to increase our situational awareness, we would like to be informed of any large outdoor events that are weather dependent and can quickly become a public safety disaster if severe weather was to occur.

This requires planning and assistance on event organizers and local emergency managers to provide to NWS Burlington some of the following information;

Name of Venue:

Date(s):

Times:

Location (Street Address, LAT/LON if possible):

Approximate Attendance:

Emergency Point of Contact and Phone #s (should be Local EM, First Responder Representative or 911 Center)

Please submit your request at least one week in advance to nwsbtv.info@noaa.gov or you can find a fillable google form [here](#).

In the end, the ultimate responsibility of keeping abreast of any weather hazards is with the venue organizers and/or local emergency management personnel.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions. Thank you for your time and we're looking forward to assisting you in the future.

Sincerely,

Scott Whittier, Warning Coordination Meteorologist – NWS Burlington
scott.whittier@noaa.gov or 802-862-8711 x223

The following links will hopefully provide some background and useful information:

NWS Burlington - <http://www.weather.gov/btv/>

NWS Burlington Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/NWSBurlington>

NWS Burlington Twitter - <https://twitter.com/NWSBurlington>

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards - <http://www.weather.gov/nwr/>

NOAA/NWS Lightning Safety - <https://www.weather.gov/safety/lightning>

NOAA/NWS Heat Safety - <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat>

Working Together to Build A

